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House Passes Year-End 'Megabus' Appropriations Package

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento) voted to pass the nine-bill 'megabus' appropriations package for fiscal year 2012. The Conference Report on H.R. 2055 provides for appropriations for Defense; Energy and Water; Financial Services; Homeland Security; Interior and Environment; Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education; Legislative Branch; Military Construction and Veteran Affairs; and State and Foreign Operations. The legislation completes the appropriations process for FY 2012.

"While it is simply not possible to give every priority the highest funding level in our austere budget environment, I believe that many important federal programs were given their due in this package. I am pleased that we were able to work in a bipartisan manner to complete appropriations for FY 2012 and avoid the uncertainties of more stopgap measures this year."

The megabus included the Energy and Water appropriations bill, which funds the Army Corps of Engineers and, in turn, Sacramento's flood projects. The House-passed version of the bill earlier this year included a 9 percent reduction in funding for Sacramento's projects. However, Congresswoman Matsui continued to advocate on behalf of Sacramento's flood protection to the Conference Committee, and the projects were ultimately funded at 7 percent above their House-passed levels. Additionally, the agreement also adds a new 'Reserve Fund' that may help further fund Sacramento's flood protection priorities.

"I am very pleased to see Sacramento's flood projects getting the funding they need and deserve in this megabus bill. While many other Corps projects were zeroed out, I worked to ensure that Sacramento's projects were able to move forward without delay. I am also hopeful that the additional Army Corps Reserve Fund will provide additional opportunities for funding

our flood protection priorities.”

The Conference agreement also provided for a number of Congresswoman Matsui’s health care legislative priorities. It maintained the Prevention and Public Health Fund that was set up under the health care law and based on Congresswoman Matsui’s own legislation. In addition, the agreement allowed for the continued implementation of the health care law – a top priority of the Congresswoman and something that House Republicans have fought to dismantle all year. Title X programs that provide medical services to low-income women have also been targeted by Republicans this year, but escaped elimination and received near full funding.

The Labor-HHS-Education piece also included full funding for the Jobs Corps program. In addition, it maintains the School Improvement Grants and Investing in Innovation Programs under the Department of Education at FY 2011 levels. Funding for the two largest education formula grants was actually increased. Title I grants for school district with a high percentage of low-income students see a \$60 million increase over FY 2011 levels. Additionally, funding for students with disabilities received a \$100 million increase over FY 2011.

Matsui added, “The appropriations package also makes investments in key jobs, education, and health programs. The health care law will continue to be implemented, and several education grant programs will be maintained at high levels. Additionally, the Job Corps program, which provides disadvantaged youth with the skills needed to obtain and hold a job, enroll in advanced training or higher education, and become productive members of society, is fully funded. Passage of this bill will help give both the private and public sectors the certainty they need to move forward on important projects.”

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